

Welcoming Remarks
Irena Sendler Award Ceremony
Nozyk Synagogue, June 28, 2011

Thank you Shana.

To dla mnie wielki zaszczyt, że mogę wziąć wspólnie z Państwem udział w uroczystości wręczenia nagrody im. Ireny Sendlerowej.

[It is my great honor to join you in presenting this year's Irena Sendler Award.]

To dla mnie zaszczyt wziąć udział w dzisiejszej uroczystości. Tad, na wstępie chciałbym przede wszystkim podziękować tobie i Taube Foundation za wspieranie wspólnoty żydowskiej w Polsce i za umacnianie więzi polsko-żydowskich

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[It's an honor to be here today. I'd like to begin by thanking you, Tad Taube, and the Taube Foundation for all you do in support of the Jewish community in Poland, and for your commitment to strengthening Polish-Jewish relations.]

I first met Magda Grodzka-Gużkowska shortly after my arrival in Poland. A standing-room only crowd had gathered at the Teatr Kamienica to celebrate Irena Sendler's 100th Birthday. On that occasion, we had the opportunity to view the world premiere of "In the Name of their Mothers," a documentary that recounted the heroism of Irena Sendler and the women who bravely supported her underground rescue operation.

Magda was one of those women. She helped smuggle children out of the Warsaw Ghetto to hiding places on the 'Aryan side.' She was also a member of the Polish underground.

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One of the most memorable moments in the film was Magda's reunion in Warsaw with William Donat, whom she had helped rescue from the Ghetto in 1943.

As she did for so many others, Magda brought the six-year-old William food every day. She also brought drawing materials and boats made out of paper, and taught him Christian prayers and customs to help disguise his Jewish identity. Magda helped William through the loneliness and fear by telling him that there were good spirits watching over him.

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Niezliczoną ilość razy Pani Magda ryzykowała swoje własne bezpieczeństwo i pomyślność aby pomagać zupełnie obcym osobom. Jej bezinteresowna odwaga jest odzwierciedleniem tego co w człowieku najlepsze. Pokazuje również obecną rzeczywistość w Polsce – demokratyczne społeczeństwo zbudowane na fundamentach wzajemnego szacunku i tolerancji.

[Time and again, Magda risked her own safety and well-being to help complete strangers. Her selfless bravery reflects humanity at its best. It also shows the reality of Poland today – a democratic society built on the foundations of mutual respect and tolerance.]

Pani Magdo, w imieniu Amerykanów z całych Stanów Zjednoczonych, chciałbym Pani serdecznie podziękować za

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współczucie, heroizm i humanitaryzm. Jest Pani dla nas
inspiracją. Dziękuję bardzo.

[Magda, on behalf of Americans across the United States,
I'd like to thank you for your compassion, your heroism, and your
humanity. You inspire us. Thank you.]